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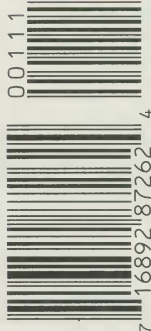
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Rumors of War

The world of
DOMINARIA.

The **DWARVEN STRONGHOLD**,
deep within the **SARRADIAN**
MOUNTAINS, 1157 years
before the great **ICE AGE.**

THE **ORCS**
AND **GOBLINS** ARE
FLOODING THROUGH THE
CAVES LIKE A RIVER,
KAYLEN! THEY CANNOT
BE STOPPED!

WE
MUST
RETREAT!

NO!

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"DWARVES DON'T RUN--
WE FIGHT!"

KEEP YOUR
BACK TO ME,
WOMAN--

--THESE CREATURES
ATTACK MORE SAVAGELY
THAN ANY I'VE SEEN BEFORE.

THEY'RE STARVED.
AN EMPTY BELLY
MAKES A FIERCE
RAIDER.

PERHAPS
YOU SHOULD
STAY CLOSE
TO ME.

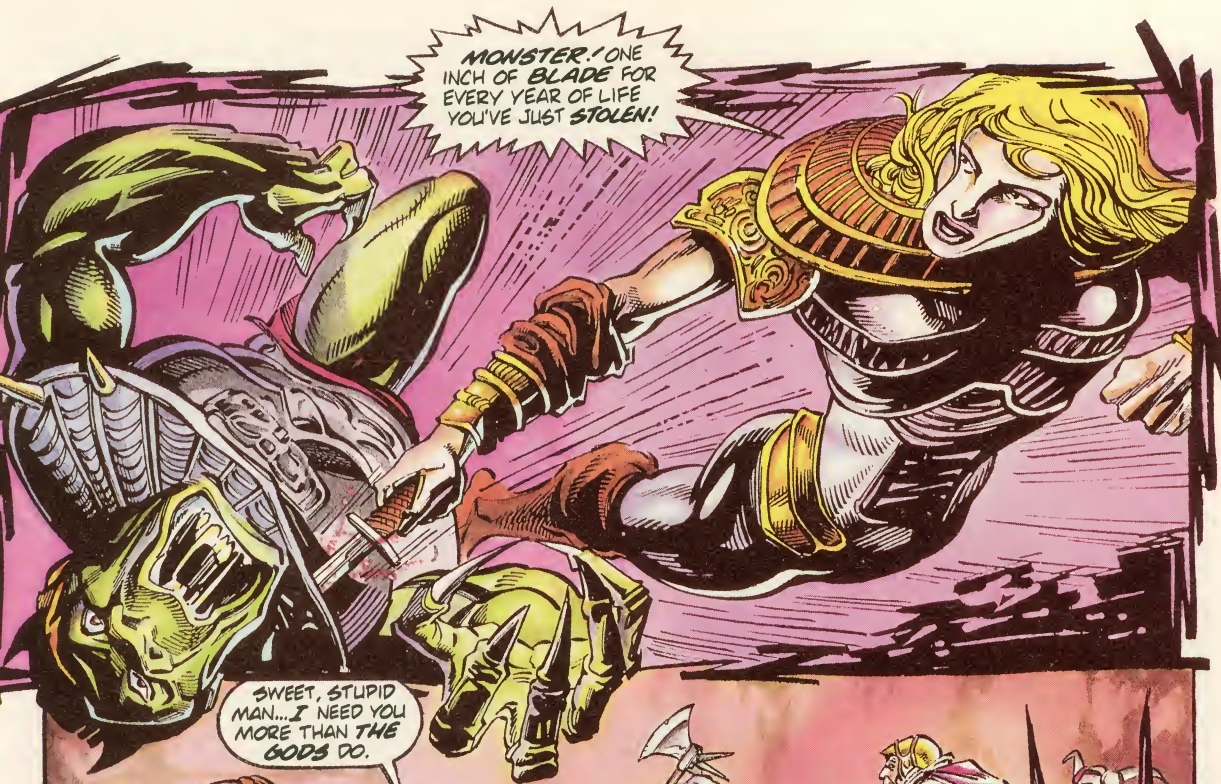
ONE DAY WE MUST
DISCUSS THE EFFECT
YOUR ATTITUDE HAS ON
MY SOLDIERS-- AND
ON ME.

I'LL TAKE THAT AS
A COMPLIMENT, MY
STOUT YOUNG BUCK...

...PERHAPS
LATER WE CAN--

--KAYLEN!

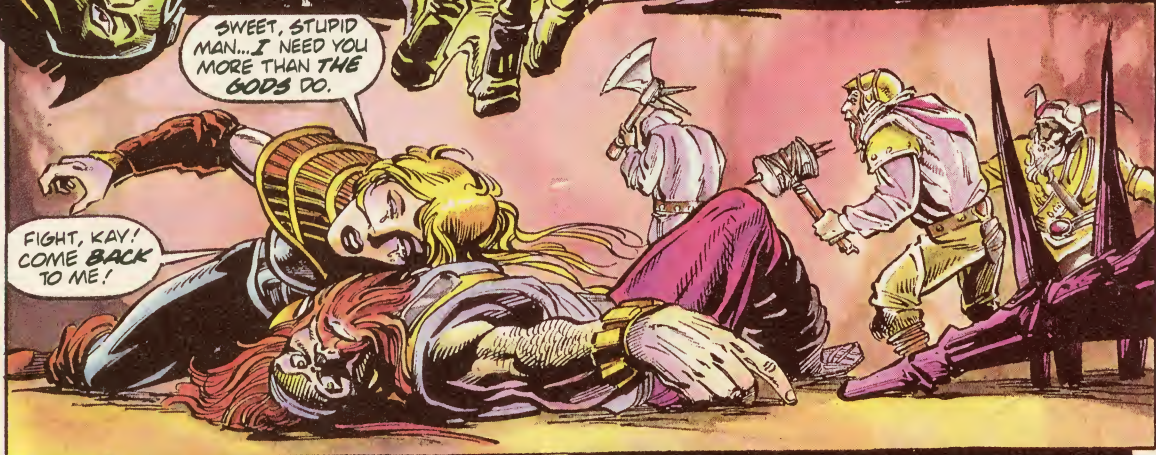




MONSTER! ONE
INCH OF BLADE FOR
EVERY YEAR OF LIFE
YOU'VE JUST **STOLEN!**

SWEET, STUPID
MAN... I NEED YOU
MORE THAN **THE**
GODS DO.

FIGHT, KAY!
COME **BACK**
TO ME!



HE IS GONE,
TYMOLIN LONEGLADE
YOUR TIME WITH US
IS FINISHED.

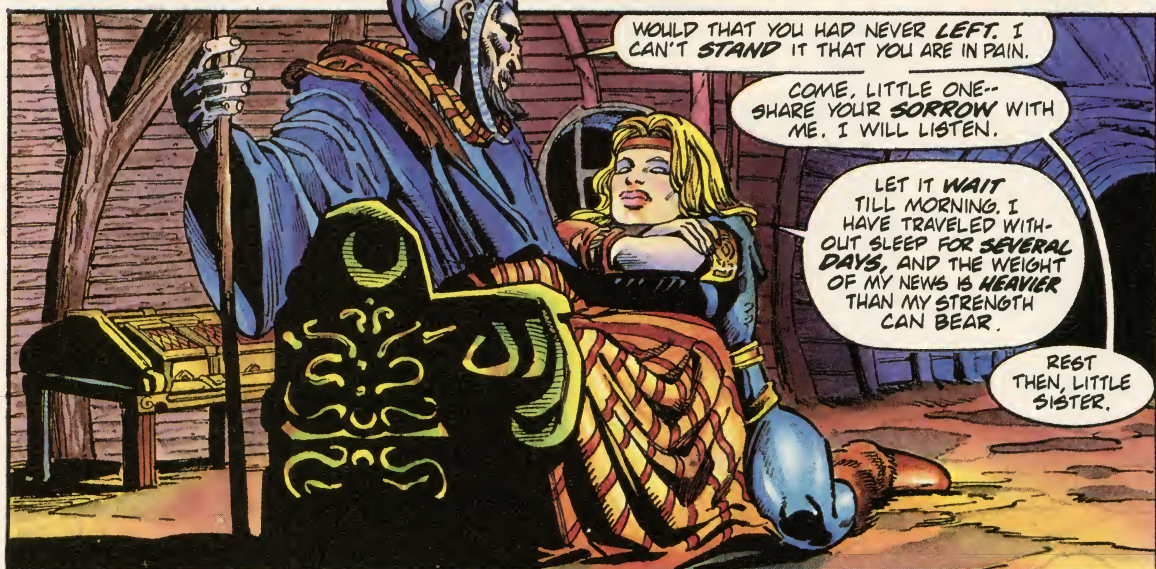
YOU MUST
GO, NOW. THAT
IS AN **ORDER.**



GODSPEED,
KAYLEN. CHARGE
THE **NETHER**
REALMS WITH
ALL THE **POWER**
THAT IS YOUR
SOUL...

Five days later. In the
FOREST of HAVENWOOD, to the
south of the mountain chain.

IT SEEMS I HAVE
AN UNANNOUNCED
GUEST, HMMM...?



TOO BIG...



TWO ISSUES!

MARZ • SEARS • SMITH



**X-O #50-X
& #50-O
COMING
THIS JUNE**



The next day.

...HE WAS **SLAIN** BY AN ORC. I ESCAPED. I WAS **NOT** THERE AT THE END.

THE ANCIENT DWARVEN KINGDOM IS **FALLEN**. THIS HAVE I **SENSED** FOR SOME DAYS NOW.

THE GOBLINS AND ORCS ARE COMING TO **ICATIA**, AND **MONTFORD** TOWN IS IN THEIR PATH.

TEV... I DO NOT WANT TO **LIVE** THROUGH THE DISASTERS TO COME. PERHAPS YOU HAVE KEPT ME **ALIVE** FOR TOO LONG...

TYM, IT'S BEEN HARD ENOUGH **KEEPING** OUT OF SARPADIAN SOCIETY-- FOR ITS OWN GOOD-- AFTER CENTURIES IN ITS MIDST. I COULD NOT BEAR MY EXILE ALONE.

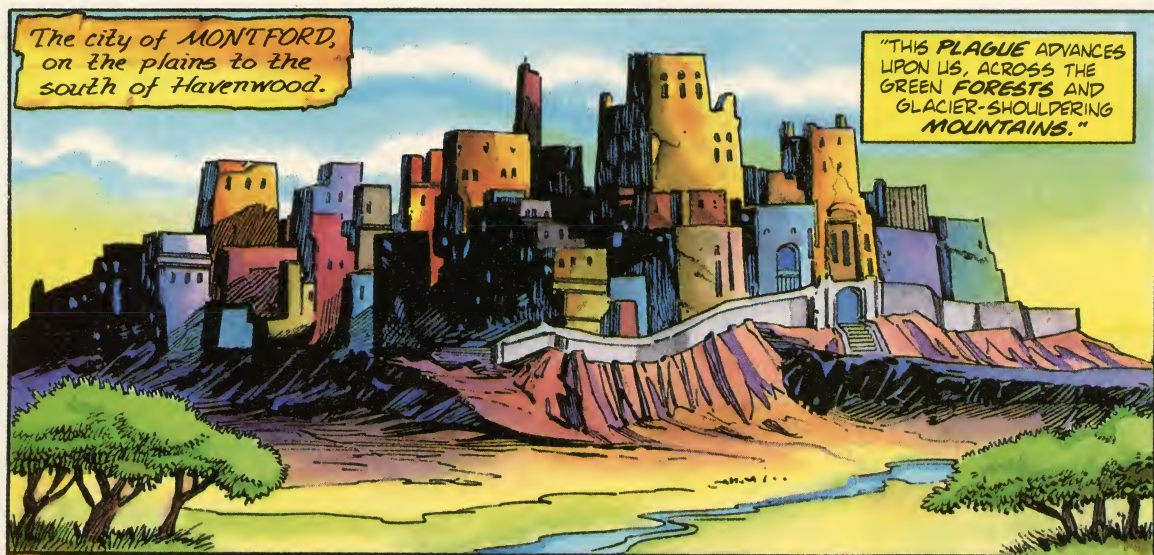
BUT I AM **NOT** LIKE YOU, TEV.

HMMM, I SUPPOSE WE **COULD** TRAVEL TO MONTFORD, AND **WARN** THEM OF THE BREWING STORM.

EXCELLENT! AND WHEN WE RETURN... YOU WILL REMOVE THE **ENCHANTMENT** THAT KEEPS ME YOUNG?

WE WILL LEAVE THAT FOR ITS **PROPER** DAY.





The city of **MONTFORD**,
on the plains to the
south of Havenwood.

"THIS **PLAGUE** ADVANCES
UPON US, ACROSS THE
GREEN FORESTS AND
GLACIER-SHOULDERING
MOUNTAINS."



CROPS WILL **FAIL**, CITIES
FALL. THE BOUNTIFUL PLAINS
OF **ICATIA** WILL BE A
WASTELAND.

NONE
CAN ESCAPE THE
DESOLATION
TO COME.

THE **FALSE**
GOD HATES ALL
OF US WHO ARE
BLAMELESS AND
UPRIGHT.



HE **REJOICES**
TO SEE YOUR HARD-
BUILT LIVES
CRUMBLING
INTO CORRUPTION
AROUND YOU.

YOU WILL
GROVEL DAILY
FOR YOUR CHILD-
REN'S LIVES.

YOU WILL **BOW**
IN **ABJECT SUB-**
MISSION AT THE
CLAWED FEET OF...

...TOURACH,
THE
DARK ONE!

BUT HOW CAN YOU
SAVE YOURSELVES FROM
EVIL'S APPROACH?

YOU DO NOT EVEN
KNOW WHERE TO
FOCUS YOUR FIGHT!

YOU ARE **STRONG**.
YOUR HEARTS ARE IN
THIS FIGHT-- BUT YOU
MUST BE **HARNESSED**
INTO A SINGLE FORCE.

WHO
WILL **BE** THAT
HARNES?

YOU,
FATHER!

HELP US
FIGHT, FATHER
FARREL!

TOURACH'S DARK LEGION, THE
ORDER OF THE EBON HAND,
GATHERS EVEN AS WE SPEAK.

TWO DAYS AGO, THIS
BLASPHEMOUS SYMBOL WAS
TAKEN FROM THE NECK OF
AN EBON HAND **SPY**.

HIS LAST
WORDS--
"TOURACH
DWELLS
AMONG
US."

MAKE NO MISTAKE, TOURACH
DOES LIVE, NOT IN THE DARK
FORM OF SOME GROTESQUE BEAST,
BUT IN THE **FALSE** LIKENESS OF
A BEAUTIFUL, INNOCENT **GIRL**.

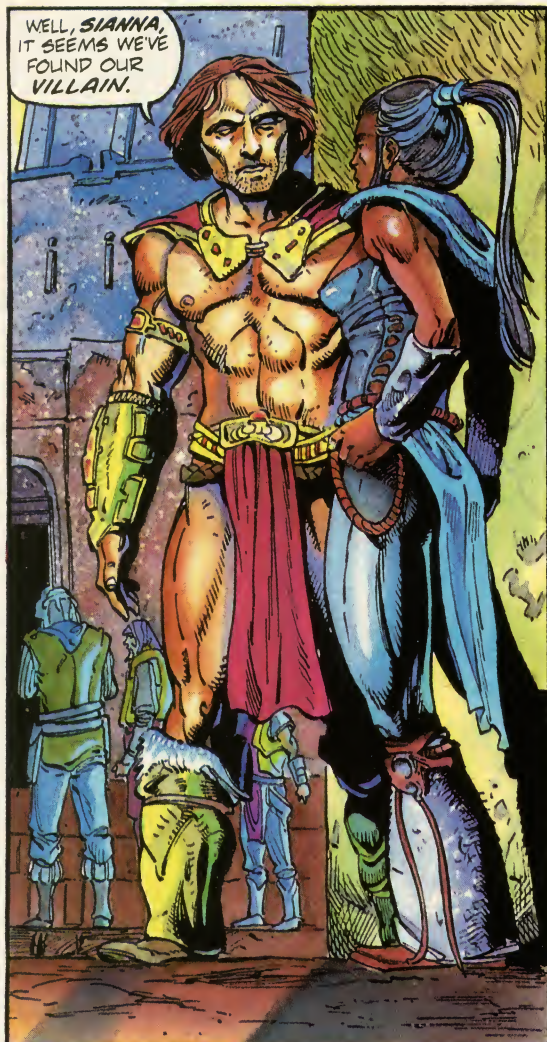
**TYMOLIN
LONEGLADE
IS TOURACH
INCARNATE!**

EVEN OUR
ANCIENTS
CANNOT RECALL
THE DAY SHE
WAS BORN.

CAN YOU
REMEMBER
HER AGING
ONE YEAR?

TOURACH PLOTS
THE **DOWNFALL**
OF OUR PEOPLE.

JOIN ME IN
DESTROYING
HIS LIVING
INCARNATION!



WELL, *SIANNA*,
IT SEEMS WE'VE
FOUND OUR
VILLAIN.



IT
WORRIES
ME, IAN.

I MEAN, TYM LONEGLADE
IS A **STRANGE** ONE, BUT I'VE
SEEN THE **FATHER** WITH HER
MORE TIMES THAN ONCE.

COULD FATHER
FARREL BE **RIGHT**
ABOUT HER?



...AND MY MOST
DEVOTED FOLLOWER
WILL LEAD US INTO
BATTLE-- WIELDING A
NEW WEAPON, CAPABLE
OF DESTROYING
TOURACH **FOREVER!**



COME
FORWARD...
SIANNA OF
MONTFORD.

HUNH?!

YOU WILL BE OUR
HOPE, YOUNG WARRIOR
YOU WILL **SLAY** A GOD.



A-AS
YOU WISH,
MY LORD...



"...YOU KNOW I WOULD
SERVE YOU TO THE ENDS
OF THE WORLD."

Hightrunk Chamber,
crown of the Elven Empire,
Havenwood Forest.

IF THE **THALLIDS**
COME CRASHING THROUGH
THESE VERY WALLS, WILL
THAT BE **ENOUGH**
TO CONVINCE YOU?

I **ASSURE** YOU, LIEUTENANT, IF THERE
ARE **THALLIDS** CLOSE BY, OUR **HUNTER-SCOUTS**
WILL HAVE **SKEWERED** AND **BASTED** THEM BY NOW.

THIS
ONE IS QUITE
DELICIOUS.

MAJESTY, IT
LOOKS AS IF OUR
MASTER SCOUT,
LOREN, HAS
BECOME ILL.

HE WILL BE **FINE**,
LIEUTENANT. WE HAVE
CRUCIAL MATTERS
TO DISCUSS.

SINCE THE END OF THE
ANTIQUITIES WAR, THE
AIR OVER **HAVENWOOD** HAS
GROWN COLDER. FOOD IS
SCARCE--AND SO OUR **MAGES**
CREATED THE **THALLIDS**.

WE NEVER GUESSED
THIS **FUNGUS-CATTLE**
WOULD GAIN THE ABILITY
TO **WIELD WEAPONS**
AND **REBEL**!

WE **CANNOT**
ALLOW OURSELVES TO
BE THREATENED BY
THOUSANDS OF THESE
CREATURES--I DEMAND
A **FULL ACCOUNT**!

"LOREN--YOU WILL DESCEND TO THE FOREST FLOOR, AND PROVIDE A REPORT WITHIN THREE DAYS."

THIS IS THE LAST TIME YOU DRAG ME AWAY FROM THE CHAMBER, MORGAN.

IN THE FUTURE YOU WILL SPEAK BEFORE THE ENTIRE COUNCIL--OR HOLD YOUR TONGUE.

FORGIVE ME, YOUR MAJESTY...

...BUT WITH DUE RESPECT, I BEG YOU--RECONSIDER YOUR DECISION TO SEND LOREN.

HE SHAMES HIS OWN FATHER--A NOBLE ELF, AND CREATOR OF THE THALLIDS--IN BETRAYING SYMPATHY FOR THOSE CREATURES.

IT IS NO SIN TO PITY ONE'S ENEMIES, MAGE. I'M CONFIDENT THE YOUTH WILL NOT SOIL HIS FAMILY'S NAME.

WE MUST LET LOREN PROVE HIS LOYALTY.

IF HE FALTERS, HOWEVER, YOU WILL BE CALLED UPON TO CORRECT HIS... CONDUCT.

OF COURSE, SIRE.

CONSIDER THE SUCCESS OF LOREN'S MISSION GUARANTEED.

Three days later, on the path to Montford.



I'M GLAD YOU'VE CHOSEN TO **WALK** WITH ME, TEV. IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU IN **OPEN AIR**, AFTER SO LONG.

THE **FOREST** BRINGS BACK GOOD **MEMORIES**, DOESN'T IT?

NOT FOR ME. THAT DIRT CLOT **TERISIARE**, AND **ARGOTH** BEYOND, HOLD NO MORE PLACE IN MY **HEART** THAN THE **GNATS** BUZZING IN MY FACE.

I SHOULD HAVE FORCED THOSE **TWO UPSTARTS** TO THROW THEIR **TANTRUMS** ELSEWHERE.

THERE WAS **LITTLE** YOU COULD DO, BROTHER. GETTING **INVOLVED** WOULD ONLY HAVE MADE THINGS **WORSE**.

YOU'RE ALWAYS **DWELLING ON THE PAST** - IT'LL BE YOUR **UNDOING**.

CHARMING AS ALWAYS.

STAY WITH ME, TYM, **FORGET** YOUR SELFISH **DEATHWISH**.

SOME DAY, YOU WILL UNDERSTAND **EXACTLY** HOW I FEEL, BROTHER.



ON THAT DAY YOU WILL **ENVY** ME MY **GRAVE**.

SHED NO TEARS, MY LOVE...

...OF **COURSE**, I WILL DO AS YOU ASK.





BANDITS!

STAY IN RANGE
OF MY CAST, TYM!
I'VE A FEELING THESE
ARE NO ORDINARY
ROADSIDE THIEVES.

I CAN'T BELIEVE
THIS! AFTER DEFEAT-
ING A THOUSAND MEN
IN BATTLE, I MUST
BE SHELTERED?

MOVE
QUICKLY, MY
FARRELITES!

THE OLD MAN
POSES LITTLE THREAT,
BUT THE GIRL MUST BE
TAKEN WHILE SHE IS
STILL OF THE
FLESH!

A BLOOD
CULT! I HAD A
FEELING!

IT'S A BIT
MORE THAN THAT,
I'M AFRAID.

THE UGLY ONE
UP THERE WITH THE
FILIGREED SKULL-
CAP IS AN OLD
ACQUAINTANCE--

ENOUGH!





SPECIAL PREVIEW

THE CITY KNIGHTS



*From The Creative Team That
Brought You The Hit
MAGIC: THE GATHERING
Miniseries*

AVAILABLE IN JUNE FROM ACCLAIM COMICS

HE
THREATENS
TO PUT
YOUR
MOTHER'S
HEAD
THROUGH
A WALL...

...BUT SHE
WON'T LET YOU
TOUCH HIM.

THOUGH IT'S
NINETY DEGREES,
YOU WEAR YOUR
LEATHER JACKET
LIKE ARMOR.

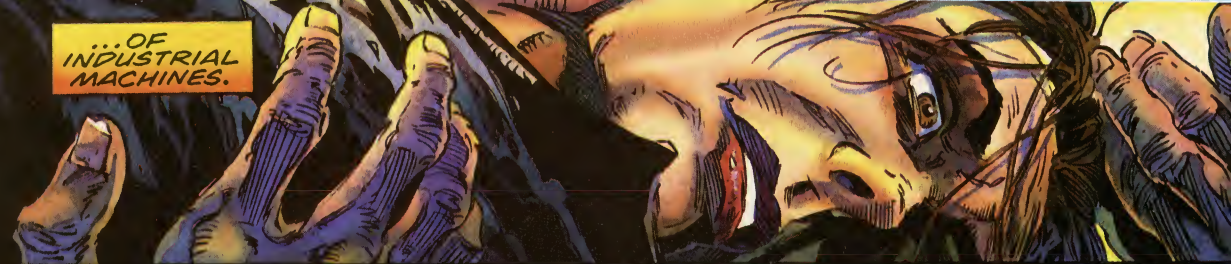
BUT IT CAN'T
PROTECT
YOU FROM
THE NOISE.

CALLING
YOU--

IT WHISPERS
FROM THE
SHADOWS
DEEP INSIDE
YOUR HEAD.

--LIKE
THE
LONELY
DIESEL
THRUM...

...OF
INDUSTRIAL
MACHINES.



IT POUNDS IN
YOUR TEMPLES--
RUSHES THROUGH
YOUR VEINS...



SOME-
TIMES IT'S
CONFUSING.



...AND YOU CAN'T
TELL WHETHER YOU'RE
IN DANGER--



--OR JUST REALLY
TURNED ON.



YOU FEEL HER BREATH.
HOT ON YOUR LIPS.

THEN YOU HEAR IT
OVER THE CREAK OF
YOUR LEATHER.

ITS LUNGS
RATTLE,
EXHALING
A RANK
PERFUME.

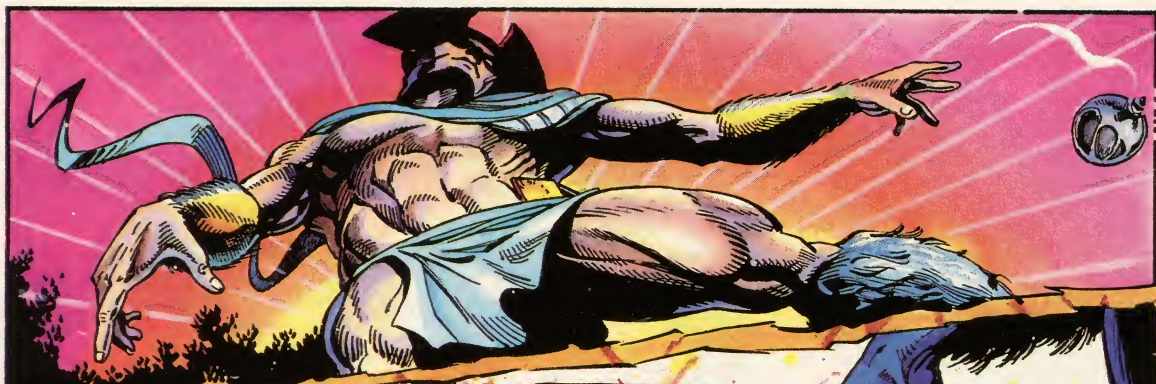
FUNNY...YOU
REALIZE
SHE'S PROBABLY
BETRAYED
YOU.

BUT ON THE OFF-CHANCE
SHE'S INNOCENT, YOU
CLUTCH THE CARD--

--FOCUS, THE WAY
SPIRO TRAINED YOU...

...AND DEFEND
HER WITH
YOUR LIFE.

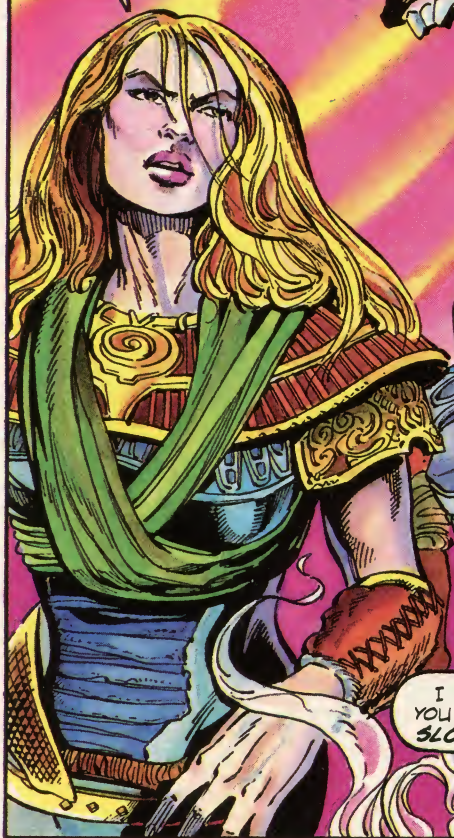




AEOLIPILE!

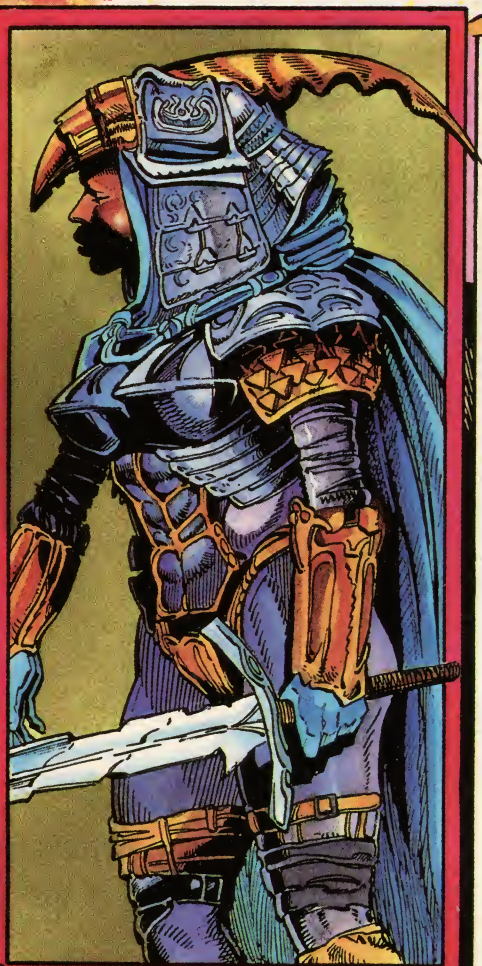


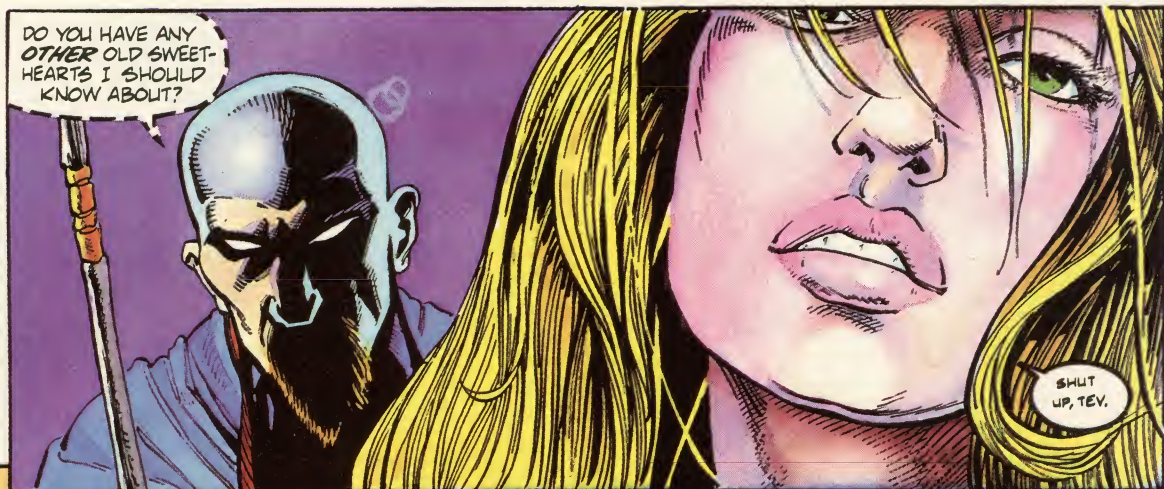
THAT...
WAS
STUPID.



I WANT
YOU TO DIE
SLOWLY...

...AND I'VE
DECIDED
AGAINST
SOILING
MY OWN
HANDS!





DO YOU HAVE ANY
OTHER OLD SWEET-
HEARTS I SHOULD
KNOW ABOUT?

SHUT
UP, TEV.



YOU REEK
OF **DEATH**,
TYMOLIN
LONEGLADE.

THANK THE
FATES WE'VE
ARRIVED IN TIME
TO **STOP** YOU
FROM
SLAUGHTERING
MORE!

HARKEN,
FARRELITES!
TIDINGS COME
FROM THE
NORTH...

...THE **DWARVES**
PLACED THEIR **TRUST**
IN HER--AND **PAID** THE
PRICE WITH THE **LOSS**
OF THEIR KINGDOM.

EVEN NOW, THE **EBON**
HAND IS AMASSING AT OUR
NORTHERN BORDERS-- HAR-
NESSING **BASE CREATURES**
--AWAITING HER **FINAL**
COMMAND.

HOW LONG
HAVE YOU
PLANNED
FOR THIS,
TOURACH?
DECADES?
CENTURIES?

IT ENDS
NOW.





ENOUGH
IS ENOUGH
TYM, WE FIGHT
FOR OUR
LIVES.!



FORGOTTEN
ANCIENTS, WITH
YOUR SACRED
BONES--
PROTECT US.!

"GO, SIANNA! THE
NÉCROMANCER'S
PATHETIC CARRION
WILL NOT STOP MY MOST
COURAGEOUS
DISCIPLE!"



FARREL'S
MANTLE HAS
SLIPPED BETWEEN
YOUR RIBS, OLD
MAN...



...I WILL
SUCCEED WHERE
MY BRETHREN
FAILED.



YOU'RE A
BRAVE CHILD. I
WILL SAY THAT.



I, ON THE OTHER
HAND, WOULD SAY SHE
IS ANOTHER VICTIM
OF FARREL'S SICK
MIND.



COVER
OUR
ESCAPE,
TEV--

"--WE'LL LOSE THEM
NEAR THE BORDER OF
THE ELVEN EMPIRE."

AMAZING!
THE THALLIDS
HAVE AMASSED
GREAT STRENGTH--
AND NOW THEY
CONSTRUCT
SHELTERS.

A
TESTAMENT
TO THEIR GROWING
INTELLIGENCE.

I SPY
AN LIPSTART
BABE IN
THE WOODS!

YOUR STARRY-
EYED ADMIRATION
FALLS ON DEAF
EARS, LOREN--
NAMELY, MINE.

THE KING'S
MASTER SCOUT
HAS COMPLETED HIS
MISSION--AND NOW AT
LAST IT'S TIME FOR
HIS "CONDUCT" TO
BE "CORRECTED."

I WONDER...HOW LONG
HAS IT BEEN SINCE SO
LITTLE HAS BEEN
SACRIFICED TO ACHIEVE
SO MUCH?



*As if awakening from
an endless dream,
the tree tastes freedom...*

*...And rebels against
that which clings to
its branches.*

*Just as quickly,
the precious
gift is lost...*



*...leaving a
stunned elf to
the mercy of
the very
creatures he
sought to
protect.*



Separated
from Tymolin
in the
darkness...

...Rage pushing
him beyond the
dimensional
veil...

...Tev Loneglade
sheds all pretense.

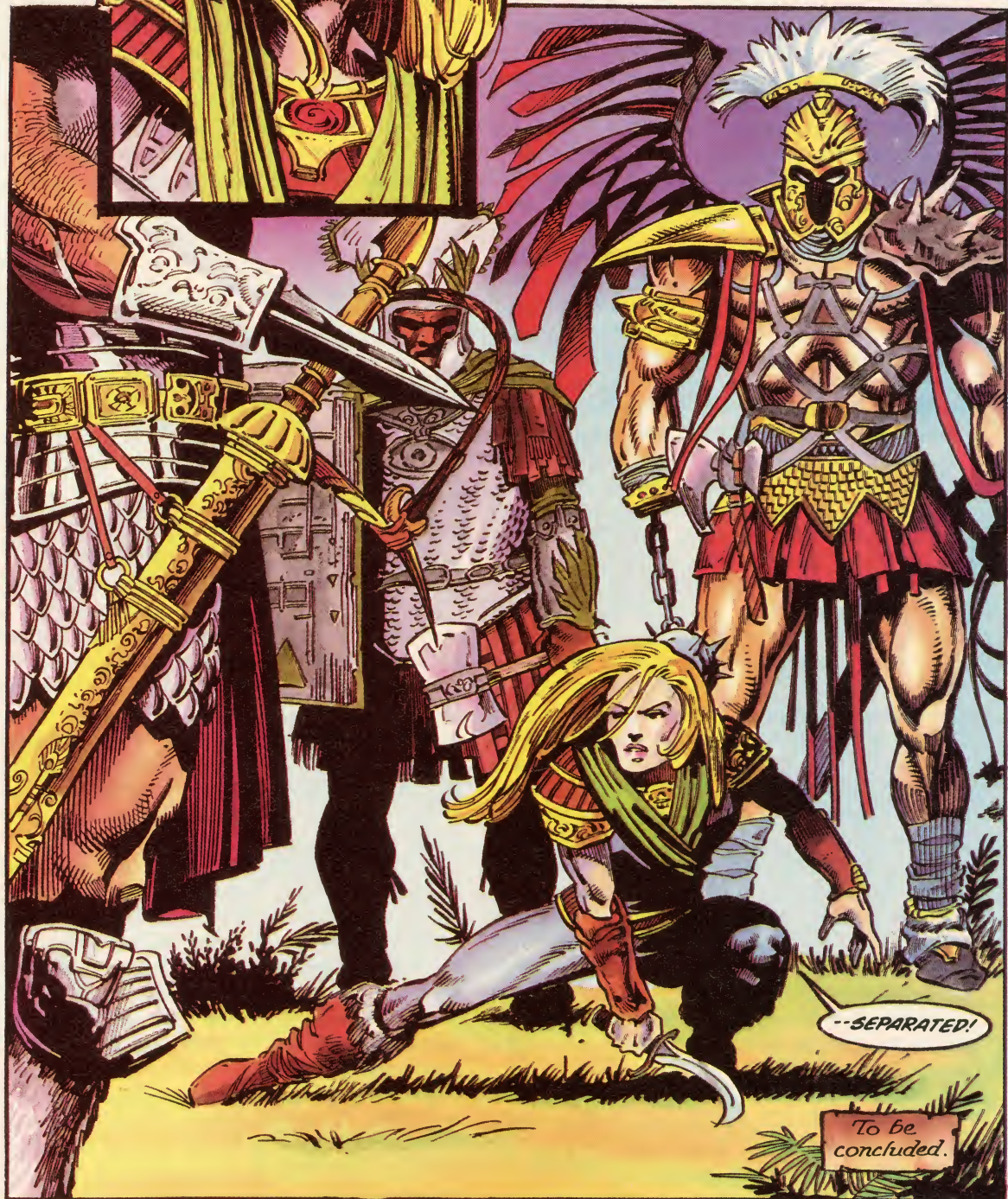
LIPSTARTS
AND TANTRUMS!
ZEALOTS AND
MURDERERS! I HAVE
TRIED TO IGNORE
YOU ALL FOR TWO
THOUSAND YEARS!

THERE IS NO
CHOICE, TYM--NOW
I AM THE
DOOM OF ALL
FOOLS!

TEV!
WHERE ARE
YOU?!

IF WE DON'T GET
TO MONTFORD
SOON, ICATIA WILL
BE OVERRUN!

NOW IS
NOT
THE
TIME FOR US
TO BE--



--SEPARATED!

To be
concluded.

MAGICTM

Signatures

ADDRESS ALL LETTERS TO:

MAGIC SIGNATURES
Fallen Empires

Jeof Vita - Asst. Editor
c/o ACCLAIM COMICS
275 Seventh Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10001

JEOF VITA When we started the
Asst. Editor **ARMADA** Magic: The Gathering

comics line, it was our intent to showcase the worlds of Dominia in all their power, glory, majesty, and even...tragedy. **Fallen Empires** chronicles the razing of the civilizations of Sarpadia and the epic struggle of Tymolin Loneglade against the forces of destruction. The characters and creatures that you see in this book are all part of Wizards of the Coasts' most recent Magic: The Gathering trading card game expansion, **Fallen Empires**.

Now if you're unaware of this phenomenon we call Magic: The Gathering, let me see if I can't get you up to speed.

Magic: The Gathering is the nation's hottest trading card game. The game itself is a duel between two players who represent the most powerful magicians on the fantastic universe of Dominia. Both players portray Planeswalkers who take turns casting spells that will both defend their ground and defeat their opponent.

The land of Sarpadia, as depicted in our **Fallen Empires** comics, is set on the world of Dominaria. Many of the nations of Dominaria contain five lands which produce five different-colored mana (Black, Blue, Red, White, and Green). This mana is the power source for Dominaria's magic, and the magical energy used in the game to cast offensive and defensive spells. Spells differ in their casting cost and power, and certain spells have neat little "fast effects" which can make games more interesting. Players combine skill, strategy, and a heaping dose of good luck to construct their decks and thwart the decks of their opponents.

A player can customize his or her deck based on which strategy he or she wishes to employ. One might wish to utilize a creature-based attack and load up with Green spells. Another might like a more direct damage deck and use more Red magic. Players who favor manipulative and deceptive gameplay can use Blue magic to frustrate opponents, while White magic can be used for defense and balanced attacking. The Black magic, a popular choice, is the magic of death and decay—not for the squeamish!

In the **Fallen Empires** expansion, the five colors of Magic also represent the various cultures of Sarpadia. Blue can be seen as representing the struggle of the Vodaliens against the invading Homarids, while the Red

magics are home to the Dwarves, Orcs and Goblins. Deep in the forests of Havenwood, the Elvenfolk thrive on their use of Green magic, while the citizens of Icatia wield the White. In sharp contrast, the sinister Ebon Hand lays claim to the sacrificial Black magics of Tourach. When you begin incorporating these cards into your own Magic deck, you'll get to see these and many other awesome creatures, legends, places and artifacts.

In fact, as an added bonus, the first book of this series contains an actual Magic: The Gathering—**Fallen Empires** booster pack for you to begin your collection! Each card is sure to draw you further and deeper into the dying light of Sarpadia.



Don't fret! Even though all of Sarpadia will be tumbling around our ears, we'll have a trusty guide on our side in the form of Shawn Carnes. Shawn is a Magic: The Gathering rules guru direct from Wizards of the Coast, who will be explaining the use of all these great new spells. He will show off all the neat combinations that we use in the story and provide you with strategy tips for you to use in your next Magic duel!

So write in and let us know what you think. Even though this miniseries only runs two issues, you never know—your letters may indeed show up in other Magic titles from Armada. I'm here to answer all your comments, by the way, I'm also an avid Magic player, so if you have any ideas for awesome spell combinations that we can use in the book, please send 'em on in!

On behalf of the Armada team, I'd like to thank you for picking up this book. I hope you enjoy it half much as we've enjoyed creating it. So then, come with me now and bear witness to the last of the **Fallen Empires**.

A HISTORY of FALLEN EMPIRES™

By John Tynes, Dominia Continuity Coordinator

The Brothers War ended a hundred years ago, but its legacy is only now beginning. The terrible magical forces unleashed upon the world of Dominaria (as seen in the Antiquities expansion and in the upcoming **Antiquities War** comic book), have brought about terrible climatic shifts, and a new Ice Age has just begun. In the southern hemisphere, the changing weather has brought misery to the continent of Sarpadia. The empires of that land are finding their resources growing scarcer and life becoming dangerous. *Fallen Empires* tells the tale of these lands, and of the events that set their fall in motion.

Development work on *Fallen Empires* began in the early summer of 1994. The design team—Skaaf Elias, Jim Lin, and Dave Pettey—took on the project with relish. It was the first expansion set that the team (who had recently joined Wizards of the Coast full-time as part of Deckmaster's Research & Development) worked on in-house and on-site. Their goal: to create a well-designed, carefully balanced card set that would encompass everything WotC had learned from previous expansions.

The setting and thematic structure of the project came concurrently with gameplay brainstorming. The team decided to focus on a major event in Dominaria's history and tell a story that was a subtle sequel to their work on *Antiquities*. They designed *Fallen Empires* to cluster around the median of card power, and to avoid both spoiler cards and useless cards. This design reflects their philosophy: that Magic: The Gathering should be a game of subtle cunning and constant transformation, rather than a mindless slam-happy game of brute force, where the player with the largest wallet always wins.

The setting and storyline of ***Fallen Empires*** has been seen in bits and pieces within the card set and in WotC's magazine, ***The Duelist***. The comic book you're holding is the first place that some of the origins of the empires' fall have been told. It's a tale of a continent wracked by desperation and corruption, as well as by menaces both internal and external.

The largest of the Sarpadian empires is Icatia, a civilized nation of merchants, bankers, and elected officials, with a strong army and advanced medical knowledge. Strong though Icatia may be without, it is torn from within: the zealot Farrel and his followers are pushing for radical religious and political reforms, a push resulting in a divided populace. Their principal opponent within Icatia is the Order of Leitbur,

a group of peace-minded moderates. The Order of Leitbur sees the Farrelites as dangerous extremists; the Farrelites see the Order of Leitbur as meek cowards.

A group which both the Order of Leitbur and the Farrelites fear and oppose is the Order of the Ebon Hand, a corrupt sect that practices sacrifice and sinister magic. The Ebon Hand keeps a low profile, but recently their experiments in creating a sentient slave-race, the Thrulls, have backfired. The Thrulls are in rebellion, causing many problems for the Order.

Off the coast lies the Merfolk nation of Vodalia. Ruled by a militant, magic-wielding Upper Class, the Vodalians are fierce and hard-working, engaging in substantial trade with Icatia and other empires. The Vodalians are opposed by another group called the Homarids: primitive but fast-spreading crustaceans who threaten the survival of Vodalia.

Havenwood Forest is home to a nation of Elves. These Elves recognized the changes in weather and began breeding new forms of fungi as a food source. The unintentional result of this breeding was the Thallids, sentient fungus-creatures that are now in revolt against the decadent Elves who created them. Much like the Order of the Ebon Hand, the Elves are reaping what they have sown.

The major forces of chaos in Sarpadia are the Goblins and Orcs, who thrive even in the harsh climatic changes that are weakening the rest of the land. Their first victory is over the small Dwarven empire, which falls to them almost immediately.

Their next target is Icatia.

Another chaotic element is the planeswalker, Tev Loneglade. He has been living as a recluse for decades, in semi-retirement after growing callous and ceasing to care about the fate of anyone other than his sister. In these pages, Tev will abandon his seclusion as events draw him unavoidably into the conflicts of the empires. The absolute power of his planeswalking abilities has left him bitter and hateful, and should he be provoked, the consequences would be disastrous.

The ultimate fate of the Sarpadian empires is not a pleasant one. The rivalries between the different empires create external discord, while the internal disputes weaken them from within. Tev Loneglade is the wild card that sets the course of the empires...but his story does not end with them. The lesson of ***Fallen Empires*** is clear: corruption breeds destruction, and those without mercy are those without hope.

Seer Analysis

by Shawn F. Carnes

Hello, planeswalkers! This time around, we get a chance to take a look at the special two-issue **Fallen Empires** series, based on the intriguing expansion deck of the same name from Wizards of the Coast. This is the third series in Armada's Magic: the Gathering™ comics line, and it focuses on the realm of Sarpadia, the central location for the expansion. My job is to call the shots as I see 'em by pointing out elements in the story as they relate to the game, and how well I think these elements translated into the comics medium. I'll be giving you all the color-commentary on the action as it unfolds.

The story starts off with quite a clash: a **Dwarven Stronghold** is under siege by numerous **Goblins** and **Orcs**. The sheer numbers of Goblins and Orcs are appropriate against the Dwarves, especially with the Goblins (the expansion deck features a number of Goblin cards, as well as **Goblin Warrens**). The focus is on Tymolin and her lover Kaylen as they defend the stronghold, even as it is being overrun. The battle seems to be accurately portrayed, reflecting the skills and strategies of both sides. The strike from behind against Kaylen is especially appropriate for Orcish behavior; the Orcs of Dominaria have not been known for their bravery or honor in battle. It is a nice touch to establish the land of Sarpadia, at least from the perspective of Red creatures.

Now on to **Montford**, which highlights **Farrel** and his followers: nice job in bringing them to life. The **Farrelites** are zealots through and through, and their fatalistic fanaticism is useful in combat situations. They are not interested in peaceful alternatives in protecting **Icatia**. Although Icatia represents the White magical aspect of Sarpadia, the zealously blind behavior of Farrel is certainly in keeping with the spirit of both the card and the color. To the Farrelites, might makes right. Farrel's use of the **Mantle**, as well as the Holy Hand Grenade-like **Aeolipile**, was an effective touch in highlighting Farrel's use of force and power to achieve his aims.

Personally, I found it almost poetic that the powerful and mighty Mantle was defeated by a simple spell from Tev, the **Disenchant**. It really can be interesting to see two opponents who are tapping the same colored mana (in this case, White) square off against one another. Tev and Tymolin's confrontation with the Farrelites also shows us that White can be a bit harsher than most people give it credit for. By the way, did you notice what colors Tev used in the battle? There was a smattering of Green and White, but the big stuff he used was Black. It will be interesting to see how **Fallen Empires** #2 develops this, as Tev is sure to run up against the **Ebon Hand**.



Finally, let's take a look at an element the comic effectively examines. One of the biggest reasons why Sarpadia fell was internal conflict. On a specific level, Morgan is a **Thelonite Druid** who possesses the special ability to manipulate the Forest. In this case, he turns a tree into a 2/3 creature to shake Loren from it and betray his location to the **Thallids**. Perhaps issue #2 will reveal Morgan's deeper reasons for giving Loren such a hard time—in turn, giving us deeper insight into the dilemma of the **Elven Empire**.

The strife within the Elven ranks (Loren vs. Morgan) is an interesting twist, bringing to light some of the turmoil that must have contributed to the collapse of such a noble empire. A common misperception when it comes to the backgrounds of the colors in Magic: The Gathering is that devotees of individual colors, in and of themselves, work well together. In this issue, Red has had an all-out battle with Red, White threatens to eliminate the heroes of our story, and Green is embroiled in chaos on two different levels.

Overall, the first issue was well crafted. Not only did it properly tie into the cards, it makes me want to read **Fallen Empires** #2! Kudos to the writing talents of Jeff Gomez and Kevin Maples. The art, as always, was breathtaking. Just one thing, however, for all of us to keep an eye on—Tev. I'm telling you, he's got some secret that will come to the surface soon enough. Also, I'm still trying to figure out the combination of cards to keep someone/something alive for centuries, just like Tymolin. Yes, I understand the premise of artistic license—and it's often been said that planeswalkers are long-lived—but it still doesn't hurt to figure these things out for game purposes. Living in perpetuity would certainly put a new dimension to the game!

Until next time, may your **Backfire** never backfire.

NEXT ISSUE

Magic: The Gathering Fallen Empires #2

With Tymolin's life in the balance, Tev Loneglade planeswalks into the middle of an escalating standoff between the insane Farrelites and the Cult of the Ebon Hand. The tragic results threaten to throw down Sarpadia's greatest kingdoms. This issue's spectacular conclusion forms the perfect lead-in to Armada's **Ice Age on the World of Magic: The Gathering** miniseries. Featuring a new cover painting by premier Magic painter Anson Maddocks, and a free set of **Creature Tokens** for use in your Magic duels.



COMING IN MAY

Ice Age on The World Of Magic: The Gathering #3

The secret behind the Ice Age that grips Dominaria is revealed in this spectacular issue: several powerful Planeswalkers who have been trapped in "The Shard" converge on one of the planet's two moons to determine the cause of this multi-planar cataclysm. As is bound to happen with Planeswalkers, a duel of epic proportions breaks out, featuring spells from **Antiquities**, **The Dark**, **Fallen Empires**, and **Ice Age**. This issue boasts a cover painting by Charles Vess, and a free set of **Creature Tokens** for use in your Magic: The Gathering game duels.



COMING IN JULY

Antiquities War On the World of Magic: The Gathering #1

The greatest, most far-reaching magical war in the history of Magic: The Gathering starts here! Adapted from events depicted in the Antiquities expansion of the Magic: The Gathering trading card game, we are introduced to Urza and Mishra, two brothers destined for destruction! Writer Jerry Prosser (**Animal Man**, **Skin Graft**, **Comics Greatest World**) lends this new series a sophisticated air, and popular **X-Men** artist Paul Smith makes his Armada debut. Featuring a painted cover by George Pratt.



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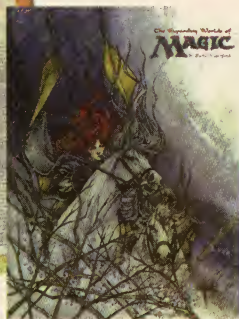
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